

Biomass Utilization

From Public Schools in Ely to Landfills in Carson City, Nevadans are finding creative solutions to use slash from forest thinnings.

**USDA
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**NORTHERN &
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Action
Program***

Project Contact:

David Atkins
USDA Forest
Service
(406)329-3134
datkins@fs.fed.us

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"It's a win-win situation."

**A biomass accumulation
dilemma on public lands**

**resulted in a solution for affordable heating of school buildings in
Ely, Nevada.**

The David E. Norman Elementary School in Ely, NV has several buildings on its campus that were constructed between 1957 and 1990. The oil-fired boiler heating system was expensive to maintain and operate.

The Nevada State Division of Forestry pursued the idea of converting the out-dated system with a state-of-the-art system that uses wood chips or pellets in an efficient, clean burning system. The State Division of Forestry obtained a \$340,000 federal grant that purchased and installed the new system. Not only does this solve a wood waste problem, but it reduces the heating expenses to the school by about 40%.

The source of the chips was an easy answer in this case. The BLM Ely Field Office had previously conducted a hazardous fuels reduction project that produced 7,000 tons of wood chips. The school was promised 1,000 tons of these chips if they could provide the transportation from the woods to the school. The 1,000 tons will feed the system for 6 years!

Additionally a percentage of the fuel will come from the local County landfill where clean unprocessed woody debris is being chipped and delivered to the school system.



County landfill biomass



The fuel storage and boiler building, Ely, NV.

"Here's a wonderful example where, in pursuit of reducing heavy fuel loads and protecting a community from the threat of wildfire, we've been able to provide a fuel source to heat a local school. It's a win-win situation. We'd look forward to expanding this highly-successful program to other school districts as we continue efforts to restore ecological health to the Great Basin."
- Gene Kolkman, BLM Ely Field Manager